REASONS
FOR A
New Parliament;
Delivered in the LORDS HOUSE,
Novemb. 20th. 1675.

With SEVERAL
Other ARGUMENTS
FOR
DISSOLVING
This Parliament
AND
CALLING
Frequent and NEW PARLIAMENTS

Printed in the Year, 1676.

Act

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REASONS FOR A New Parliament, &c.

THAT according to the Constitution of the Government, and the Antient Laws and Statutes of this Realm, there should be frequent *Parliaments*; and that the Antient Practice of this Nation hath been accordingly.

That, Besides the Right of the People by the Common Law, There are two Statutes now in force (*viz.*) *4th. Edw.* 3. 10. And the *36th. Edw.* 3 14. The Substance of which are; *That for the Maintenance of the Rights of the Kingdom, and for Remedy of Mischiefs and Grievances that daly happen, A* Parliament *shall be held every Year once, or more oftner if need be.*

And these Lawes are to be understood of a NEW *Parliament*, every Year, and not of calling the Old; as is most manifest by the practice not onely of all the Ages before, but of some hundreds of years after these Lawes were made; *Prorogations* or long *Adjournments* being things never heard of until latter years. And it is most unreasonable that any particular number of Men, should for more then One year, much more for *Fifteen* yeares together ingrosse so great a Trust of the People as to be their Representative in the House of Commons; and that all other the Gentry and Members of Corporations of the same degree and quality with them, should be excluded: Neither is it agreable to the nature of a Representative to be continued for so long a time, so that those that Chose them, are not allowed frequent oppertunities of changing the hands in which they are forced to put so great a Trust, the mutuall correspondence and intereſt of those who Chose, and are Chosen, admitting of great variation in length of time.

How many may there be in future *Parliaments*, if continued as long as this, that may be *Protestants* when they are Chosen, and yet may come in so many years justly to be suspected to have *Changed their Religon*. Nay, how many are there in this present *Parliament* who were chosen by the People, when they were of the very same Interest with them, but in length of time are become Officers in the Court, and about the Revenves? And therefore they themselves cannot say, that they are equally free to

Act for those that Chose them, as they were before, nor are they of the same Interest as when they were Chosen, for now they gain and have advantage by the Peoples Payments; and if they should say they are the same men they were, we can call their fellow Members that have set with them, to witness whether the Prove b be not true, *Honores mutant Mores?* Whether they have the same Opinions, and the same Freedom they had before? Nay, may it not be said without offence, that even in this House of Commons there are not a few, who when they were Chosen were looked upon as men of Estates, and are either since grown, or discovered to be of that indigent condition as they are much fitter to receive the Publick Maintenance than give the Publick Money?

The Representatives of the Freeholders, Citizens, or principal Burroughs and Corporations of *England*, by the Old Law, were to be New Chosen once a Year; so that they perfectly give the Sence of those that Chose them, and were the same thing as if those were present that Chose them, they so newly coming from them, and so quickly returning to give an account of their Fidelity, under the penalty of Shame, and no further Trust.

The House of Commons thus Yearly New Chosen, affords the Sence, the Mind, the Information, the Complaint, the Grievances, the Desires of *All* the *People* for whom they serve, through the whole Nation; and the People are thereby secure, no Law can be made or Moneys given, but what themselves, though at home, fully consent and agree to.

But on the contrary, the long continuance of any such as are intrusted for others, especially of such as have so great a Power over the Purse of the Nation, makes them liable to be Corrupted, and won from the Publick Interest, and necessarily produces *Cabals* and Parties, and the Carrying on of Private Interests, and Court Factions, rather than the Publick Good, or the true Interest of the King or Kingdom: And takes away the great Security the Nation hath: That if it should happen, that the Spiritual Lords, because of their sole Dependance on the Crown, the Popish Lords being under the pressure of so severe Laws, together with the Court Lords, and Great Officers should in any future *Parliament* make up a great number of the House of Lords, and should pass things very prejudicial to the Publick, yet all should prove ineffectual, and the Nation remain Safe in a House of Commons, *Lately Chosen*, that have not had time to learn new *Sentiments*, or put off their *Old Principles* at a good *Market*.

Moreover it is from the Long Continuance of *Parliaments* that Gentlemen are content to spend such great Sums of Money to be Chosen, as *Fifteen hundred*, or *Two thousand Pounds*; whenas in former times, when *Parliaments* were short and frequent, the Members constantly received their

their Wages both of their Countys, Citys and Burroughs. Besides all these, the very Priviledge of the Members, and those they Protect in a *Parliament* of fifteen years duration, is a Pressure that the Nation cannot well support it self under; So many hundred Suits of Law stop't, so vast Sums of Money withheld from the Right Owners, so great quantity of Land unjustly Possessed; and in many Cases, the length of time securing the Possession, and creating a Title. But in *Parliaments Annually Chosen*, such as did oppress or injure others, could not expect a second years *Choice*.

How can this present *House of Commons* be the True Representative of those they Serve for, since the People and they are of *Different Minds*? and if they were to Choose again, they would Choose other Men of their own *Sentiments*; And it must be confest, Whatever is not *Natural* is by *Force*, and must be Maintain'd by *Force*. A *Standing Parliament* and a *Sanding Army* are like those Twins that have their Lower Parts United, and are Divided only above the Navel, they are Born together, and cannot long Out-live each other.

To conclude this Debate, The *Continuance of This present Parliament any Longer, is Unpracticable*; *the unhappy Breaches fallen out betwixt the Two Houses, is as unlikely to be Repaired by* This, *as they are to be Renewed by a* New Parliament.

These are not the Conceptions of any *Private Man's Brain*, But the Sense and Judgment of the far greater part of the *Temporal Lords*, who by virtue of their Peerage, are a Great Part of the *Government*, and are to be *Conservators* of the *Rights* of the *Kingdom*.

And it is to to be Noted, That upon the Great Question, *Whether or no, the House of Lords should Petition his Majesty to Dissolve this present* Parliament, *and Call a* New One? There were *Forty One* Temporal Lords with *six Proxies* for the Address, and there was not above *five* Lords and *sixteen Proxies* against it, except the Bishops and such Lords as hold Offices and Places, or receive Pentions from the King. And, Whether those Lords who are contented with their own Estates, and do not seek to Enlarge them by Court Offices, Or the Bishops and those other Lords, that have their immediate Dependance upon the Crown, Are likeliest to give the Best and most Impartial Advice, for the Good, Safety and Prosperity of the *King* and *Kingdom*,? Let all Rational Men Judge. Neither was this the Sense of these Lords only, but the known Judgement and Desire of that Part of the House of Commons, who (like *Worthy Patriots*) have stood for the RIGHTS of their Country, in despight of all Temptation or Opposition whatever,

And to his Eternal Honour, Sir *H G.* did not only express his own dislike of the long sitting of this *Parliament*, but also did lay in his Countrys Claim to their Right of having *Parliaments* Annually Chosen, openly

ly Declaring in the *House of Commons*, That it was as much the Right of the People of *England*, to have frequent and New *Parliaments*, as to have any at all. And that a *Standing Parliament* and a *Standing Army* were alike dangerous to *England*.

These unanswerable Reasons being offered in Both *Houses of Parliament*, was certainly that which first gave the People courage freely to Discourse and Examine this Great Matter. But no sooner did they consider thereof, but they were forc't to close with it as an undeniable Truth, and the only *One thing Necessary*. And now almost every Corner of *England* is full of Discourse and Desire of, and Prayer for a *New Parliament*, as the only probable means to preserve the Kings Person, and the Protestant Religion from the Designs of the Papist, and to Restore the almost lost Trade, Riches, Honour and Strength of this Kingdom.

And although these Reasons offered by so many Great and Worthy *Patriots* are wholly unanswerable, Yet *the Loss of Trade*, *Distress*, *Poverty*, *Ruine*, *Contempt and Dishonour*, that every day comes more and more upon this Kingdom, hath furnished the People with Arguments of another kind, and which seem to have great weight in them. *They say*, That without a *New Parliament Trade* is lost, and consequently the *Navigation*, and with it, both the Riches and Strength of *England*, and the Trade of this Kingdom hath daily impaired for 13. or 14. Years together, under the Conduct of this *Parliament*, and that loss of a great part of it doth arise from some Acts of this *Parliament*. As for instance, the loss of the *Irish*, *Scotch*, and *Norway* Trade, hath been occationed by some Acts of this *Parliament*, and can never be regain'd without the Repeal of those Acts, and that this *Parliament* is not so likely to Repeal their own Acts as a *New Parliament* is.

And further the People say, It is the Design of the *Papist* (in order to the bringing in of their Arbitrary Religion and Government) to Impoverish this Kingdom, and ruine the Trade by *Burning* the City, Towns, Burroughs, and Trading Corporations thereof; and that except there be some speedy and effectual Course taken to bring the mischief these wicked Men have Designd against our Religion and Nation, upon their own Heads, it will very much endanger the whole: And they cannot so well expect that this should be done by This *Parliament*, as by a *New Parliament*, Because there was so very much proved before This *Parliament*, concerning the [*Fireing of London*] and yet so little done in it. And they do conceive, That if the very Bottom of that *Hellish Plot* had been Severely looked into, and All Persons *whatever* concerned therein brought unto Condign Punishment, these *later Fires* had been wholly prevented, And they further say, That although this present *Parliament* (to their Eternal Honour) have greatly expresst their dislike of the *Popish Religion*,

yet

yet notwithstanding it hath for several years very much increased in this Kingdom; And his Royal Highness, who is the presumptive Heir to the Crown did Marry one of that *Religion*, and thereby cause a great number of Priests and Jesuites to come over, and remain here; And, to the *amazement* of the whole Nation, He hath since *Left the Communion of the Church of England*, And the *Papists* in most parts of *England* are more than ordinarily *Armed* (who by Law ought to have no *Armes* at all) and are grown to that Insolency, that they every day pervert his Majesties Subjects, and Print Books in utter defiance of the Established *Religion*. They have lately Printed their *Mas Book* in *English*, with their Crafty *Annotations* upon it; and, as they say, *Permissu Superiorum*. So that except there be a *New Parliament*, speedily Called to unravel all their *Policies* and in time take care to preserve the *Protestant Religion*, to us and our Posterity, they seem to think themselves secure of all when ever the King Dies, And therefore the People desire a *New Parliament* to prevent that *Deluge of Popery*, which hitherto hath come every day more and more upon us, notwithstanding all the endeavours of this *Parl.* to the contrary.

And further, Because this *Parliament* cannot meet till the 14 *February*, and a *New One* may meet in 40 *Dayes*, and this a matter of so great import, that there is not one Moment of Time to be lost; For all the Safety or Our *Religion* depends wholly upon the Kings Life, and how uncertain the Life of any King, or Prince, or Person whatsoever is, whose Death would advantage the *Popish Interest*, the Experience of all Ages shews us.

Moreover the People say, There seems an absolute Necessity of a *New Parliament*, because this *Parliam* by the ill Advice of some Persons hath been *Prorogued* for more than a year, whereas by the Laws and very Constitutions of this King om (as is already said) *There ought to be a Parliament every Year*. And therefore it is the Opinion of many, very Learned in the Law, *That this Parliament being Prorogued beyond a year, is naturally Dissolved, and ceases to be any longer a Parliament, and that the People of* England *owe no Obligation to any Laws they shall make, nor are to be Held by them: Nay, That the Parliament Men themselves may be Impleaded and Arraigned, and stand Responsible for any Act that they shall do, as those that have Usurped the exercise of the Leistative Power of* England, *when their Authority for their Legislation ceased*. And how pernitious this may prove, even to his Majesty as well as the People, especially if his Majesties Necessities shall Call for a Supply, may easily be immagined: For few will pay it without a Distress, and who will Distrain, when the Authority that Orders the Distress is Defective? If you bring it to an Issue, the Juries will not think themselves obliged to ruine their Neighbours and themselves, for the sake of a *Parliament* that by corrupt and illegal ways, Impose themselves upon them.

Besides

Besides all this, the People say, That if we are without a *Parliament* till *February*, the whole Kingdom is in danger to be Lost to the *French*. And this is an Argument of which every Man is sensible, for although some Men are so fool sh as to be content to part with their *Religion*, and others with their *Liberty*, yet none are so vilely wretched as to be content to have their *Religion*, *Liberty*, and *Estate* too, wholly swallowed up by a *French Conquest* : And yet this is too like to be the Case, except a *Parliament* be Called before *February*, which is the soonest time this *Parliament* can meet as a *Parliament*. In former time the *English* did not think themselves safe except they were stronger at Sea than any other their Neighbours. And so carefull was Queen *Elizabeth*, to prevent the *French* from growing strong at Sea, as she would not suffer them to build any *Men of War* at all; Judging nothing could secure *England* from a second *French Conquest*, if once *France* were Powerfull at Sea; But our Modern Policy hath been so quite contrary, that we have stood still while the *French* King is like to be Master of *Sicily* and *Flanders*, and is already so powerful as he thinks himself Master at Sea, as appears by the unparalleld Injuries the *French* offer every day to our *English Merchants*, and that oftentimes in his Majesties own *Ports*; The *French* having in time of Peace taken and carried into *France*, near 300 *English Merchant Ships*, and condemned many of them, and so long detein the rest, putting them to so great charge as hath been an intollerable loss to our *Merchants*, and dishonour to the Nation. The *French* King hath now 167 *Ships of War*, and is now building 40 more against next Summer, while the Navy of poor *England* is in so Poor, Rotten Ruinous, and Despicable a Condition, as cannot be named without dishonour to the Nation. So that the *French* seem to want nothing but leisure to make themselves *Master* of all *England*. And should the *French* King either make a Peace, or prove Victorious, it is much to be fe red, it would be too late for a *Parliament* to save us.

This being the Case, we will Appeal to all *Men* that have *any Love to God the Protestant Religion, their King or Country, the Laws, Liberties, Estate, Honour or Safety of* ENGLAND; Whether it be not the indispensible Duty of every *English Man*, from the greatest Peer o the meanest Commoner, (by Petition, or any other lawful means what oever) to endeavour to move his *Majesty* immediately to Call a *New Parliament*? And, Whether it be possible to imagine that any *English Man* can oppose this, except such, whose sottish negligence never gives them leave to examine any thing aright; or such whose Pentions from *France* or *Rome* have wholly blinded their Understandings; or such who mind nothing so much as heaping up Vast Estates and Honours to themselves and their Relations though Purchased *with the Ruine of their Country*; Or such, whose already *Extrajudicial Practises*, make them Dread the very thought of a

NEW PARLIAMENT?

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